

PSC Consumer Connection



Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century

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NATURAL GAS SAFETY INFORMATION

Call Before You Dig/What To Do If You Smell Natural Gas

Spring is here and that traditionally brings increased excavation activities including many planned activities in and around your yard. The **Missouri Public Service Commission** reminds customers and businesses to call before they dig in their own yard or when excavating for a commercial project.

In addition, the Commission reminds customers what to do if they smell natural gas. Information on these topics can be obtained by calling the PSC toll-free hotline at 1-800-392-4211 or by going to the PSC website at www.psc.mo.gov and clicking on Consumer Issues-Natural Gas.

Dig Safe. Dig Smart. Know Missouri's Ground Rules.

Make The Call

Many utility company facilities, including natural gas pipelines, are located underground and out of sight. If you plan to dig in your own yard or excavate for a commercial project, Missouri law requires that you notify the Missouri One Call system at 1-800-DIG-Rite (344-7483).

Wait The Required Amount Of Time

Missouri law requires that any person making or beginning any excavation notify all underground facility owners that may be affected by the excavation at least two but not more than 10 working days in advance, except in case of an emergency. After you make the call, facility owners will determine if the planned dig is near any underground facilities. If needed, they will survey and mark the area where utility lines are located. **Do not begin digging until all of the utilities in the area have been located and marked.**

Respect The Marks

After it is determined that markings are required, the facility owner will dispatch a field locator who will locate and mark the excavation site with paint, stakes or a flag.

Utilities mark their facilities according to specific guidelines and color codes. **Respect the markings when you dig.**

Dig Safely

Digging carelessly can cause disruption of vital utility services and environmental damage, or even loss of life. **Become a partner in damage prevention and DIG Safely.**

What You Should Do If You Smell Natural Gas

Be Careful

- Evacuate the building immediately.
- Do not operate electrical switches.
- Do not smoke, use lighters, matches or any other open flame.
- Do not start your vehicle if it is in an attached garage.

Other Important Tips

- Go to a neighbor's house and call your local natural gas company to report the odor and its approximate location.
- Do not call from inside your house. Calling from a phone inside your home could create a spark that could cause an explosion.
- If your service is disrupted for any reason, please make sure that a trained professional relights your pilot flames.

The Odor

Natural gas itself does not have an odor. An odorant has been added so natural gas can be detected if a leak occurs. The odor is similar to the smell of "rotten eggs."



Need Help Paying Your Telephone Bill?

Missouri Lifeline and Link-Up

Low Income/Disabled Assistance and Link-Up Can Help.

These state and federal support programs can help by offering qualified people a discount on their monthly local telephone bill.

Low Income Assistance

Discounts as much as \$13.50 per month depending on your local phone company.

Disabled Assistance

Discounts as much as \$3.50 per month depending on your local phone company.

Link-Up

Under this program, qualified low income individuals may receive a 50 percent reduction (up to \$30) on initial telephone connection charges.

Persons May Be Eligible If They Participate In Any Of These Programs

Food Stamps; Medicaid; Low Income Home Energy Assistance Programs; Temporary Assistance to Needy Families; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Federal Public Housing Assistance; National School Lunch Program's free lunch program; Disabled benefits.

For more information contact your local phone company.

Transaction fees for AmerenUE customers reduced or eliminated at pay stations

The Missouri Public Service Commission Staff, the Office of the Public Counsel and AmerenUE have reached an agreement which will reduce or eliminate a pay station fee AmerenUE customers were paying. In some cases, customers were paying \$1 a month at the pay station (such as a grocery store or gas station). This practice began in June of last year in many areas of Missouri. In other cases, a fee was previously established at the pay station and that fee was increased in June of last year. The fee that customers paid did not go to AmerenUE.

Under the agreement, if the fee was established in June, that fee would cease to exist. If a fee had been established prior to June and then increased in June of last year, the fee would revert back to the fee that existed prior to June 2005.

AmerenUE indicated that it will work to complete the restoration prior to June 1 and in any event the process will be completed within the next 90 days.

Instructions on How to Access the PSC Electronic Filing and Information System (EFIS) for Case Information

1. Once you have an internet connection established, type www.psc.mo.gov in the address bar. This will bring up the PSC internet site.
2. Click on the EFIS logo near the top right portion of the screen.
3. Read the disclaimer and if you agree click on the "I agree to the terms above."
4. Then click on the "Resources" tab at the top right portion of the screen.
5. Then select Case Information.
6. Then select Case Filing/Submission.
7. Beneath the heading of "Select maximum of three criterion", select the box for Case No. and then enter the Case Number of the particular filing that you are looking for (i.e. GS-2005-0246).
8. Then click on the "Search" button and a list of document choices will return on the left portion of your screen.

For printed materials regarding a number of consumer issues or copies of this newsletter, please call 573-751-7491 or email joyce.neuner@psc.mo.gov

Who to Contact: Missouri Public Service Commission
Consumer Hotline **1-800-392-4211**
or email: pscinfo@psc.mo.gov

Mail your inquiry or complaint to:
Missouri Public Service Commission
Consumer Services Department
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

